

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (currently amended) The method of claim 24 further including the steps of:

collecting device information from ~~a device of a client system without obtaining, the~~
device information being insufficient to specifically identify the user;

associating a device ID with the device information at a main server system, the
device ID being insufficient to specifically identify the user;

selecting said coupon according to the device ID to thereby identify the coupon
appropriate for said user based on the device information; and,

transmitting the selected coupon from the main server system to the client system.

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the device information is
obtained from the user, the device information including at least one of a postal zip code
associated with the user and a state in which the user resides.

~~said collecting step comprises the optional substep of:~~

~~obtaining from the remote user demographic characteristics including at least one of a~~
~~postal zip code associated with the user and a state in which the user resides.~~

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 further including the step of:

associating the device ID with ~~a remote the~~ client system, the main server system
using the device ID to identify the client system.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 further including the step of:

generating a printed version of ~~one of~~ the transmitted coupon at the ~~remote~~-client system.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 further including the step of:

transmitting a request from the client system to the main server system to perform said ~~selecting~~using step wherein the request includes the device ID.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein said request transmitting step includes the substep of:

automatically including the device ID in the request without any intervention by a ~~remote~~the user of the client system.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein said request transmitting step occurs automatically without any intervention by a ~~remote~~the user.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein said request transmitting step occurs at predetermined intervals.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 wherein the ~~remote~~-client system operates in accordance with an operating system characterized by a graphical user interface (GUI), said method further including the steps of:

displaying an icon visible to the user in a first display state; and,

displaying the icon in a second display state different from the first display state when a new coupon is available for the user.

10. (original) The method of claim 9 wherein the second display state is a flashing display state.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~3~~1 wherein said transmitting step includes the substeps of:

encrypting coupon data corresponding to the selected coupon at the main server system in accordance with a server system encryption strategy; and,

sending the server-encrypted coupon data to the client system.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 further including the step of:

receiving the server-encrypted coupon data at the client system;

encrypting the server-encrypted coupon data in accordance with a client system encryption strategy to thereby generate doubly-encrypted coupon data; and,

storing the doubly-encrypted coupon data on the client system.

13. (currently amended) The method of claim 12 further including the steps of:

decrypting the doubly-encrypted coupon data at the client system; and,

generating a printed version of one of the selected coupon at the ~~remote-client~~
system.

14. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 further comprising the steps of:

transmitting advertising data to the client system; and,

displaying at least a portion of the transmitted advertising data on a display portion of
the ~~remote-client~~ system.

15. (currently amended) The method of claim 14 wherein the advertising data
comprises a plurality of advertising impressions, and, wherein said displaying step comprises the
substep of:

selecting one of the plurality of advertising impressions as a function of a selected
subcategory of coupons available on the ~~remote-client~~ system.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 3 further comprising the steps of:

detecting events occurring at the ~~remote-client~~ system;

storing the detected events in a user history file; and,

transmitting the user history file to the main server system.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein said detecting step includes the substeps of:

determining when one of a plurality of advertising impressions has been displayed on a display portion of the ~~remote~~-client system; and,

determining a sponsor identification of the advertising impression.

18. (original) The method of claim 16 wherein the storing step comprises the substep of:

encrypting the detected events to thereby generate encrypted user event information; and,

writing the encrypted user event information to the client system.

19-21. (canceled)

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 24 further including the steps of:

collecting device information from a device on a network;

associating a device ID with the device information;

selecting said coupon according to the device ID;

encrypting coupon data corresponding to the selected coupon; and,

transmitting the encrypted coupon data from the main server system to the client system.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 22 further including the step of:

decrypting the encrypted coupon data to recover the selected coupon.

24. (currently amended) A method of secure electronic coupon distribution comprising the steps of:

associating a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) with a coupon, a promotional code being appended to the URL; ~~including a promotional code with a coupon;~~

invoking use of the URL with a browser to thereby enable a user to redeem the coupon; and,

disabling future use of the invoked URL.

~~displaying the coupon to a user;~~

~~disabling access to the URL by the user; and,~~

~~invoking the URL with a browser to thereby enable the user to redeem the coupon.~~

25. (original) The method of claim 24 wherein said invoking step includes the substep of selecting the coupon by one of clicking on the displayed coupon and clicking on an object different than the coupon displayed to the user.

26. (currently amended) A method of operating an electronic coupon distribution system comprising the steps of:

collecting device information from ~~a device of a client system without obtaining, the device information being insufficient to specifically identify the a user of the client system;~~

associating a device ID with the device information at a main server system, the device ID being insufficient to specifically identify the user;

selecting a coupon according to the device ID to thereby identify the coupon appropriate for said user based on the device information; and,

transmitting the selected coupon from the main server system to the client system.

27. (currently amended) The method of claim 26 wherein the device information is obtained from the user, the device information including at least one of a postal zip code associated with the user and a state in which the user resides.

~~said collecting step comprises the substep of:~~

~~obtaining from the remote user demographic characteristics including at least one of a postal zip code associated with the user and a state in which the user resides.~~

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 26 further including the step of:

associating the device ID with ~~a remote the client system,~~ the main server system using the device ID to identify the client system.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 further including the step of:

generating a printed version of one of the transmitted coupons at the ~~remote~~-client system that includes the device ID.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 further including the step of:

transmitting a request from the client system to the main server system to perform said ~~selecting~~-using step wherein the request includes the device ID.

31. (currently amended) The method of claim 30 wherein said request transmitting step includes the substep of:

automatically including the device ID in the request without any intervention by the ~~remote~~-user of the client system.

32. (currently amended) The method of claim 30 wherein said request transmitting step occurs automatically without any intervention by the ~~remote~~-user.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 32 wherein said request transmitting step occurs at predetermined intervals.

34. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 wherein the ~~remote~~-client system operates in accordance with an operating system characterized by a graphical user interface (GUI), said method further including the steps of:

displaying an icon visible to the user in a first display state; and,

displaying the icon in a second display state different from the first display state when a new coupon ~~are~~is available for the user.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 34 wherein the second display state is a flashing display state.

36. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~28~~26 wherein said transmitting step includes the substeps of:

encrypting coupon data corresponding to the selected coupons at the main server system in accordance with a server system encryption strategy; and,

sending the server-encrypted coupon data to the client system.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 36 further including the step of:

receiving the server-encrypted coupon data at the client system;

encrypting the server-encrypted coupon data in accordance with a client system encryption strategy to thereby generate doubly-encrypted coupon data; and,

storing the doubly-encrypted coupon data on the client system.

38. (currently amended) The method of claim 37 further including the steps of:

decrypting the doubly-encrypted coupon data at the client system; and,

generating a printed version of one of the selected coupons at the ~~remote~~-client system.

39. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 further comprising the steps of:

transmitting advertising data to the client system; and,

displaying at least a portion of the transmitted advertising data on a display portion of the ~~remote~~-client system.

40. (currently amended) The method of claim 39 wherein the advertising data comprises a plurality of advertising impressions, and, wherein said displaying step comprises the substep of:

selecting one of the plurality of advertising impressions as a function of a selected subcategory of coupons available on the ~~remote~~-client system.

41. (currently amended) The method of claim 28 further comprising the steps of:

detecting events occurring at the ~~remote~~-client system;

storing the detected events in a user history file; and,

transmitting the user history file to the main server system.

42. (currently amended) The method of claim 41 wherein said detecting step includes the substeps of:

determining when one of a plurality of advertising impressions has been displayed on a display portion of the ~~remote~~-client system; and,

determining a sponsor identification of the advertising impression.

43. (previously presented) The method of claim 41 wherein the storing step comprises the substep of:

encrypting the detected events to thereby generate encrypted user event information; and,

writing the encrypted user event information to the client system.

44. (currently amended) A coupon distribution system, comprising:

means for collecting device information from a user of a ~~remote~~-client system indicative of one or more demographic characteristics of the user ~~without obtaining, the device information being insufficient~~ to specifically identify the user;

means for associating a device ID with the device information at a main server system, the device ID being insufficient to specifically identify the user;

means for selecting coupons according to the device ID to thereby identify coupons appropriate for the user based on the user's demographic characteristics; and,

means for transmitting the selected coupons from the main server system to the client system.

45. (currently amended) The system of claim 44 wherein said collecting means includes means for obtaining from the ~~remote~~-user demographic characteristics including at least one of a postal zip code associated with the user and a state in which the user resides.

46. (currently amended) The system of claim 45 further including means for associating the device ID with the ~~remote~~-client system, the main server system using the device ID to identify the client system.